

coaching them, the UNM team has taken upon themselves to manage, train, and govern their own team. Founded four years ago, the students have worked diligently over that time, as they have improved their skills and turned their vision into a successful and accomplished team.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the UNM Undergraduate Mock Trial Team—Laura Worden, Cris Romero, Nicolas Cordova, Daniel Whiteley, Valeria Garcia, Danielle Harrier, Sarah Peterson, and Seth Barany—and wish them the best at the national competition.

NORWOOD HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS  
BASKETBALL TEAM

**HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 1, 2014*

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Norwood High School Mavericks girls' basketball team and their coach, Greg King, for winning this year's 1A State basketball championship title.

Their thrilling 38 to 34 victory over the Caliche High School Buffaloes marks only the second time in the school's history winning this prestigious athletic title. According to Coach King, this is a team that fights hard for every victory on the court and in the classroom. These talented young women exemplify the versatility and passion of our amazing student athletes, and will no doubt have bright futures.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be able to offer my sincere congratulations to Norwood for this year's exciting victory, and I commend Coach King and each member of the team for their sportsmanship and competitive spirit as they continue their bright academic and athletic careers.

IN HONOR OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION

**HON. DARRELL E. ISSA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 1, 2014*

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, today, April 1st, marks the 30th anniversary of the effective date of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The FAR replaced the Armed Services Procurement Regulation and the Federal Procurement Regulations. The principles of the FAR system have remained constant, providing a consistent government-wide approach to the rules and processes of contracting with the U.S. Government. The FAR has helped facilitate our ability to tap into the vast resources of the private sector in those instances when the work of the government can best be performed by outside entities.

The United States Federal government is one of the world's largest consumers of goods and services, with total procurement spending of approximately a half trillion dollars each year. We need to ensure that the government acquires goods and services in an efficient and streamlined fashion, while getting the best value for the American taxpayer.

Many have criticized the fashion in which the government acquires goods and services, particularly information technology, as cumbersome and inefficient. The FAR has evolved to provide broad flexibility to the government, while balancing the need to conduct business with integrity, fairness, and openness. Under the FAR, small businesses have grown into a critical business partner for the Federal government.

The FAR is the Federal regulation that most reflects a collaborative process. Unlike other Federal regulations, the FAR is not signed by one agency, but by three agencies—the General Services Administration, the Department of Defense, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration—under the overall direction of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (in the Office of Management and Budget). They are supported by seventeen other civilian agencies and the small agency council. Together they continuously improve Federal acquisition, incorporating best practices from private industry while protecting taxpayer dollars from waste and abuse.

The FAR has its own authority for rulemaking which streamlines the process but provides the opportunity for participation in the rulemaking process by both government users and the public. There have been notable collaborative rulemakings in the past, such as the implementation of the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act of 1994, and I support the continued use of the FAR rulemaking process to provide robust exchanges between government and the public.

From the shortest FAR clause which reads "United States law will apply to resolve any claim of breach of this contract" to the longest one, the Government Property clause, which is over 5000 words long, the FAR is a flexible instrument designed to do the job.

More than 30 percent of the government's discretionary budget is dedicated to procurement—the grunt work of the government. It may not be glamorous, but it is what makes the government work. We acknowledge and support the FAR on its anniversary, but remain committed to streamlining and improving its operation and ensuring that acquisition professionals across the government have the tools, training, and support they need to properly use this critical tool.

While the FAR is by no means a perfect document, most countries in the world, whether developed or developing, study the FAR and borrow from it for their procurement system. More importantly, the hard working men and women of the acquisition workforce play a vital role in the policy that is developed for the FAR, and in making that policy work on a daily basis they strive to ensure that the taxpayers, in the end, get best value.

On behalf of those taxpayers, I direct my thanks to the acquisition workforce community for all you do to make our federal acquisition system work. Our system, while not perfect, is better than any alternative out there and something for you to be proud of—you make it work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 1, 2014*

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 147, I was unable to attend.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

HONORING CHAPLAIN BENJAMIN  
VEGORS ON HIS RETIREMENT

**HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 1, 2014*

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chaplain Benjamin Vegors, who is retiring after giving over forty years of service to our nation's veterans. A dedicated servant, Chaplain Vegors spent countless hours counseling and caring for our veterans throughout the Pacific Northwest at the Jonathan N. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington.

A World War II veteran, Chaplain Vegors served in the Army Air Corp from 1942–1945, assigned to Europe as a tail gunner in B24 Liberator bombers flying 30 missions over Germany and Austria. When asked what called him to the ministry, Ben tells about one particular mission over Germany when two of the plane's outboard engines were shot out. With the plane out of formation and slowly losing altitude, the pilot had to make an emergency landing. With enemy soldiers in pursuit, Chaplain Vegors felt certain that they were all going to die—if they bailed out of the plane, they would be shot in the air but if they stayed in the plane, they were sure to go down. While sitting in his usual landing position, Chaplain Vegors made a midair commitment that if he survived, he would serve God for the rest of his life.

Following discharge from the military, Chaplain Vegors went back to school and then to Seminary at Multnomah Bible College in Portland, Oregon. His pastoral career began in Astoria, Oregon, followed by a ten-year post in Junction City, Oregon. Afterwards, he went to Walla Walla, where he met Jim Dennis, the Chaplain at the VA Hospital. Chaplain Dennis invited Ben to accompany him on his night calls to veterans. This led to an intermittent chaplaincy appointment with the VA and eventually to a part-time chaplaincy position.

In 1972, he was appointed as a full-time chaplain. After 42 years of service as Chaplain of the Jonathan N. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington, Chaplain Vegors is retiring. Knowing that he has made a difference in countless veterans' lives, Ben once said that he would serve 1,000 years if he could. As it is, he is the oldest Chaplain in the United States. A man of integrity and high principle, his humility and his impact on Eastern Washington's veterans and on his country will long be remembered.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Chaplain Vegors for a lifetime of dedicated service.